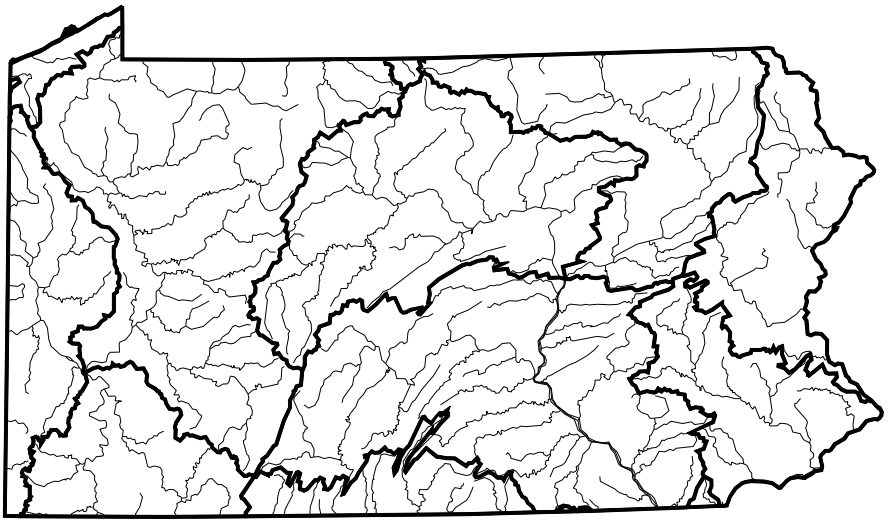
Pennsylvania



Basin Boundaries
(USGS 6-Digit Hydrologic Unit)

For a copy of the Pennsylvania 1994 305(b) report, contact:

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Surface Water Quality

Over 81% of the surveyed river miles have good water quality that fully supports aquatic life uses and swimming. About 8% have fair water quality that partially supports these uses, and 11% have poor water quality that does not support aquatic life uses and swimming. The most widespread pollutants are metals, which impact over 2,092 miles. Pollutants identified less frequently include suspended solids (impacting 603 miles), nutrients (impacting 586 miles), and pH (impacting 273 miles).

Abandoned mine drainage is the most significant source of surface water quality degradation in Pennsylvania. Drainage from mining sites pollutes at least 2,404 miles of streams representing 52% of all degraded streams in the Commonwealth. Other sources of degradation include agriculture (impacting 694 miles), municipal sewage treatment plants (impacting 241 miles), and industrial point sources (impacting 206 miles).

Pennsylvania has issued fish consumption advisories on 23 waterbodies. Most of the advisories are due to elevated concentrations of PCBs and chlordane in fish tissue, but a few advisories have been issued for mirex and mercury. In 1994, the State deactivated two advisories for dioxins on Codurus Creek and the South Branch of Codurus Creek as well as one advisory for chlordane on the Delaware River.

Ground Water Quality

Major sources of ground water contamination in Pennsylvania include leaking underground storage tanks, containers from hazardous materials facilities, and improper handling or overuse of fertilizer. Petroleum and petroleum byproducts are the most common pollutants in ground water. Coal mining and oil and gas production have also elevated concentrations of several elements (including chlorides, iron, barium, and strontium) in some regions of the Commonwealth. A Ground Water Quality Protection Strategy was adopted and released to the public in February 1992, and an Implementation Task Force was formed in

August 1992. The Task Force reviewed all program regulations and scheduled revisions that will advance the Strategy goal of nondegradation of ground water quality.

Programs to Restore Water Quality

Eliminating acid mine drainage from abandoned mines will require up to $5 billion. The cost, difficulty, magnitude, and extent of the problem have hampered progress. To date, the Commonwealth has funded studies to determine the effectiveness of alternative techniques for treating mine drainage and preventing contamination. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service's Rural Abandoned Mines Program also reconstructs abandoned mine sites in Pennsylvania.

Programs to Assess Water Quality

The Water Quality Network monitors chemical and physical parameters almost monthly and biological parameters annually at 168 fixed stations on rivers, streams, and Lake Erie. In 1991, Pennsylvania began annual sampling at 15 to 20 lakes for 5 years. After 5 years, another set of lakes will be sampled annually for 5 years until 90 lakes have been monitored. The Commonwealth also conducts ambient ground water monitoring at 537 monitoring sites.

Individual Use Support in Pennsylvania

Designated Use[a]		Percent				
		Good (Fully Supporting)	Good (Threatened)	Fair (Partially Supporting)	Poor (Not Supporting)	Poor (Not Attainable)
Rivers and Streams (Total Miles = 53,962)[b]						
	Total Miles Surveyed	81				
	24,948		0	8	11	0
	24,948	81	0	8	11	0
	24,948	81	0	8	11	0
Lakes (Total Acres = 161,445)						
	Total Acres Surveyed					
	–	–	–	–	–	–
	–	–	–	–	–	–
	–	–	–	–	–	–

- Not reported.
[a] A subset of Pennsylvania's designated uses appear in this figure. Refer to the State's 305(b) report for a full description of the State's uses.
[b] Includes nonperennial streams that dry up and do not flow all year.